

Linda Clair
Seven-day Meditation Retreat
Kallara Conference Centre, Australia
30 November – 7 December 2019
Transcription from Audio Recordings

File 1a – Saturday afternoon guided meditation

Linda: So welcome everyone, and close your eyes. The start of a big adventure. You've got no idea what's going to happen. You might expect certain things to happen but really, you've got no idea what's going to happen this week. And you never have any idea what's going to happen, you just think you do. So see this as a challenge, as an adventure. You don't need to be scared – there's nothing to be scared of – but that doesn't mean that at times the fear won't feel real. But even fear is just a thought. When you look closely at what you are scared of you're scared of your own past repeating itself. You can only be scared of something that has already happened; you can't really be scared of something that hasn't happened.

So we're going to spend a week sitting here in our bodies as much as possible. And particularly the first twenty-four hours of a retreat can often be a bit bumpy. You can question why you're here – "What am I doing here?" But the important thing is to stay, and once you're through that first day things will settle down. It doesn't mean they'll be easy or that you'll always enjoy being here, but what you want in your life is a challenge – you want to feel alive, you don't want to feel fear. You want to be able to rise to whatever challenges life presents. And you're all here because being comfortable is not enough. Comfort is fine but it's not going to satisfy you.

So take a few deep breaths into the belly and feel your body. Really feel your body sitting here in this room right now. You're nowhere else. And you might think you want to be somewhere else but really this is where you want to be, whatever is happening. So make sure your back is quite straight without being rigid. This isn't about rigidly adhering to some mindset or rules or state. Of course there is a structure to this but within that structure anything can happen.

(Body scan sections not transcribed.)

What we're doing here is using the sensations in your body to keep reaffirming that this is where I am right now. And that might seem obvious but every time you start to think you're pretending that you're somewhere else. It's a movement away from where you really are, which is here in your body.

And keep breathing into the belly, really using your breath as an anchor in your body. So this is the most tangible place in the body to feel the breath, to be with the breath. You can feel the abdomen rising and falling as your body is breathing. It's a very definite movement. You're here, now, nowhere else. So thinking is a movement away from where you are right now. It's an avoidance of being here. So each time you realise you've been lost in thinking – and as soon as you realise that you're back in your body – consolidate that by going to the breath in the abdomen. Really use your breath as an anchor. And you'll need to do this again and again and again. And you need to be prepared to keep doing this as long as it takes. And of course, a lot of things will happen. Resistance will arise, you'll get tired, disillusioned, but the main thing is to keep going. You need to be strong,

deeply strong and determined, not in a forceful way. So take this moment by moment. Watch that movement away from where you are and keep bringing your attention back to the rise and the fall of the abdomen with the breath.